

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2022

Remarks at a Virtual Fundraiser for Pennsylvania Democratic Congressional Candidate Representative Matthew A. Cartwright

October 26, 2022

Well, you know, first of all, I want to thank Marion and—you say your "lovely wife"; some things are just self-evident, man. I told you before, you married up. And, Matt, thanks for representing the district. It's really, genuinely close to my heart. And I'm Joe Biden from 2446 North Washington Avenue, now referred to as "Biden Way." I really am—appreciate the mayor when she did that. And so I miss being home.

And look, thanks for supporting Matt. There's a couple of things you've got to—you do know about Matt. One of them is, he's a man of an incredible integrity. What he says, he does. He's tough. He's strong. He's independent. And he's willing to work across the aisle to get things done for the people he represents.

You know, and he's going to stand up for everyone and anyone to fight for the people he represents. He'll join them: working people, middle class. And by the way, the middle class built this country. Wall Street didn't build it. The middle class built it. And labor built the middle class. Unions built the middle class.

And I've been proud to work with him. And we signed the bipartisan infrastructure law in the—you know, to provide an enormous number of jobs. I'll speak to that in a minute. But I also was proud to sign into law—he was with me when I did it—because a lot of employers force women to sign on to saying: "If in fact there's any charge against me, it has to be—it has to go to arbitration. You can't go to court." No longer, because of Matt's help.

Matt knows victims—Matt knows that some victims want their cases resolved in private, but other survivors want their day in court. And that should be their choice, no one else's—and Matt gets that.

And look, in—just 13 days until one of the most important election is in our lifetime. And that's not hyperbole, because what happens in the next—when this Congress—this off-year is going to decide the direction of our country for a long time.

Let's be clear: This election isn't a referendum, it's a choice, a choice between two vastly different visions of America. Because of Matt, Democrats are building a better America for everybody with an economy that grows from the bottom up and the middle out.

Where I come from in Scranton and then in Claymont, Delaware, it's about how—giving working class folks a chance. You know, I'm so sick and tired of trickle-down economics, the theory that if the wealthy do well, everybody's going to get—I've never seen that work.

But conversely, if we work for the middle class and working folks that—everybody does well, including the wealthy. They still do well.

Republicans like his opponent are doubling down on what I call the "mega-MAGA trickle-down economics" that benefits the wealthy, that failed the country before and will fail it again.

And look at the facts: Twenty months ago, COVID ruled our lives. Today, COVID no longer controls our lives. Twenty months ago, our economy was in ruins. Today, jobs are up, employment is down, and manufacturing is back. We created 700,000 manufacturing jobs in America—more than ever—more than ever.

And we also are in a position where we are—we've cut the deficit in half in the meantime. We cut the deficit this year by \$1 trillion, 400 billion. Hear me now: Democrats—they used to talk about "big-spending Democrats." Give me a break. It's the Republicans who are the big spenders. We cut the deficit last year, with Matt's help, by \$350 billion, and this year by \$1 trillion, 400 billion. We cut the Federal deficit in half.

But even with all this progress, we know people are still struggling with inflation. It's a global issue driven by a pandemic that's worse by—and made much worse by Putin's war in Ukraine.

And by the way, inflation is lower here in America than almost every other advanced country. I know that isn't much solace when you're just trying to put food on the table. But the truth of the matter is, that's why we've been determined to reduce everyday costs for people.

You know, my dad used to say, when we lived in Scranton and in—all the time I live with him when I was a kid. He—what—at the end of the month, is there enough money to pay all your bills with just a little bit of breathing room left? Well, thanks to Matt, we passed the history—historic legislation to lower the costs for prescription drugs.

And by the way, now if—next year—beginning—pass this year, but beginning next year, all seniors on Medicare cannot have any drug costs for the year beyond \$2,000 total. So if they have cancer, God forbid, and they're using drugs that are 14 grand a year, they only have to pay \$2,000 a year.

We lowered the cost for health care premiums for those who are on the affordable health care act by \$800, because this is actually taking—gas prices continue to fall. Look, all this stuff about "where we are"—I have gotten—we've gotten gas prices down—gasoline prices down almost to where they were before the pandemic.

Because of actions we've taken, gas prices continue to fall. Continue to fall. They fall over \$1.20—going to be down in \$1.35 since this summer. And they're going to go down further when the gas companies agree to my demand, and our demand, that they pass the savings on the price of a barrel of oil. When that goes down, it should be reflected at the pump. But it's not these days. We're going to insist that they have a direct correlation.

Now, what are—what's the Republican plan? Well, we don't have to wonder; they're actually telling us. They're being honest about it. Kevin McCarthy, the Republican leader in the House, and his fellow MAGA Republicans say their number-one priority—check it out; go online—their number one priority if they win control of the Congress, will be to repeal what we have done.

We—the power we just gave Medicare to negotiate for drug prices—gone. The \$2,000 cap on prescription drugs for seniors—gone. The \$35-a-month cap on insulin for seniors with—with diabetes and other diseases—gone. Gone. They're back to paying 30 times that amount, which they pay now. The savings and health care premiums of \$800 a year for millions of Americans under the Affordable Care Act—gone.

As a matter of fact, they're still determined to get rid of the Affordable Care Act, which is the only reason why people who can't afford insurance and have a preexisting condition are able to get insurance, millions of them. And so, look, it means an end to protection for tens of millions of people who can't afford health insurance because they have a preexisting condition.

The most aggressive action to deal with global warming and lowering your energy bills by thousands of dollars, because that's what we do in the bill we passed—in the Inflation Reduction Act—it will be gone.

The corporate minimum tax. You know, there were 55 Fortune 500 companies in 2000 that made \$40 billion, didn't pay a single, solitary penny in taxes. Now we've made at least a minimum tax of 15 percent, which pays for most of this.

Now, look, Republicans love to call, again, Democrats, "big spenders." They claim they're always for less Federal spending. Give me a break. Democrats are fiscally responsible, and Republicans are fiscally reckless. As I said, the deficits fell by \$1.4 trillion this year, the largest 1-year drop in American history. Follow—that follows \$350 billion reduction last year.

And we're going to reduce the deficit another \$250 billion over the next 10 years by the Medicare legislation—they're able to lower prices.

Under Trump, the Federal deficit went up before the pandemic, during the pandemic, and every single year. One of the big reasons was Trump's tax cuts, which they all voted for, overwhelmingly benefit the top 1 percent of the people. It cost \$2 trillion, and it wasn't paid for. Now, Republicans are—and it's supposed to expire in 2024.

Now, Republicans are saying if they win, they're going to extend and make permanent Trump's tax cut. Not on my watch. As long as I'm President, that's going to be vetoed because middle class people need the breaks.

If you put the entire Republican plan together—and this is done by the budget office—[inaudible]—it's going to add 3—hear me now, \$3 trillion to the deficit.

You know, and you're coming—and they're coming after your Social Security and Medicare. I know that sounds strange. It sounds like, "Ah, we're"—exaggeration. Rick Scott, who was up campaigning for—for Matt's colleague—and Senator Ron Johnson had—they had plans to cut Social Security and Medicare.

And now they have a ticking timebomb. They're saying Republicans have made it clear—and they've said it publicly—that if they win control of the Congress, they're going to shut down the Government and refuse to pay America's bills for the first time in history unless I cut Social Security and Medicare. Not a shot. Not a shot.

They're so determined to cut Social Security and Medicare, they're willing to take down the American economy over it, because that'd be the one thing to put us in a deep—[inaudible]—recession. Look, there's nothing—nothing—[inaudible].

Folks, the choice is really pretty clear. I know I'm going quickly here, but I know you—[inaudible]—a lot of time. Everything is at stake from our personal freedoms, to the economy, to our very democracy. But I know we can meet this moment.

I truly believe we're just getting started. I've never been more optimistic about America's future. Never. I need you. We need you. Matt needs you. You've got to reelect him.

We just have to remember who we are. We are the United States of America. There's literally nothing—nothing—beyond our capacity if we work together.

And look, folks—I say it again: This is not a referendum; this is a choice. And the Republicans are being straightforward. And this is not your father's Republican Party. This is not traditional conservative Republicans. These are a group of folks—over 270 people running for State and local office on the Republican ticket say that they're—what I call the "MAGA Republicans." They're the guys who don't acknowledge that we won the election last time still. Lying like the devil.

And they're also the ones who were out there making the case that not only that, but the insurrection that took place on January 6—the people engaged in it were patriots. You know, you

can't call yourself a democrat with a "small d"—democracy—if the only time you win—you say you win is if you actually win because either the election was—you either win it or it was stolen.

Or you can't be calling yourself much of a patriot if you call the people who were breaking down the doors—literally, the doors and the windows of the Congress and two cops ended up dying—you can't all yourself a patriot if, in fact, you're arguing that the folks who broke in were the true patriots. "They were patriotic Americans." Give me a break. Not in the neighborhood I grew up in.

There's nothing—remember—beyond our capacity. We are the United States of America. We're the only country in the world that's come through every crisis we've faced stronger than we entered it.

So this isn't just about building back. It's about building a better America. We have a shot to do this. We really do, but you've got to vote.

And by the way, you know, Matt's opponent poured in a couple million bucks at the very end of this campaign. He needs help. He needs help.

And I say to all my friends from labor who are on this call, you're the ones that—as they say in Claymont, Delaware, where I moved to from Scranton—you're the ones that "brung me to the dance." You're the ones who—making this country what it is. And we need your help—as much help as you can give.

This is a truly, truly fine man. We need his integrity, we need his judgment, and we need his voice in the Congress.

So thank you all. God bless you all, and may God protect our troops. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:41 p.m. via video conference from the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Marion Munley, wife of Rep. Cartwright; Mayor Paige G. Coggins of Scranton, PA; Pennsylvania Republican congressional candidate James R. Bognet; President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia; and Sen. Richard L. Scott, in his capacity as chairman of the National Republican Senatorial Committee. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 27. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

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Subjects: Budget, Federal : Deficit and national debt; Congress : House of Representatives :: Minority leader; Democratic Party : Virtual fundraisers :: Rep. Matthew A. Cartwright; Diseases : Coronavirus, domestic prevention efforts; District of Columbia : 2021 civil unrest and violence at U.S. Capitol; Economy, national : Inflation; Economy, national : Strengthening efforts; Elections : 2022 congressional elections; Elections : Voter participation; Employment and unemployment : Job creation and growth; Energy : Energy efficiency and weatherization, homes and buildings; Energy : Gasoline, oil, and natural gas costs; Environment : Climate change; Health and medical care : Affordability and costs; Health and medical care : Health insurance, protection of coverage; Health and medical care : Medicare and Medicaid; Health and medical care : Prescription drugs,

affordability and costs; Infrastructure, national improvement efforts; Labor issues : Unions :: Labor movement and organized labor; Russia : President; Russia : Ukraine, airstrikes and invasion; Social Security and retirement : Social Security program; Taxation : Corporate tax rates; Ukraine : Russian airstrikes and invasion.

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